

REMARKS

In light of the above amendments and following remarks, reconsideration and allowance of this application are respectfully requested.

It is submitted that these claims, as originally presented, are patentably distinct over the prior art cited by the Examiner, and that these claims were in full compliance with the requirements of 35 U.S.C. §112. Changes to these claims, as presented herein, are not made for the purpose of patentability within the meaning of 35 U.S.C. §101, §102, §103 or §112. Rather, these changes are made simply for clarification and to round out the scope of protection to which Applicants are entitled.

Claims 4, 5, 9 and 10, and amended claims 1-3 and 6-8 are in this application.

At paragraph 1 of the outstanding Office Action of March 14, 2003, the Examiner rejected claim 1-4 and 6-9 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Godau et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,407,554). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Amended independent claim 1, recites in part, "A signal input and output apparatus...comprising...**a single transmission path along which a plurality of different types of apparatuses are connected, each of said apparatuses issuing a different type of control signal.**" (Underlining and bold added for emphasis.)

It is respectfully submitted that Godau teaches a diagnostic tester that can be connected in any motor vehicle and can recognize the type of vehicle to be diagnosed. The diagnostic tester then automatically adapts to the corresponding signal assignments. However, only one vehicle at a time can be connected to the diagnostic tester and the diagnostic tester can only accept one universal type of connector. Also, the diagnostic tester connects directly to each



electronic control device, and thus, even if able to be connected to multiple devices (which it is not) these connections would be in a parallel fashion, thus comprising multiple signal paths. In contrast, amended independent claim 1 teaches a signal input and output apparatus that can be connected to several different devices at the same time. Also, these devices can have different types of connectors inserted into the jack at the same time and the connectors are connected along a single signal path, thus resulting in a series configuration.

For similar reasons, it is also believed that amended independent claim 6 is also distinguishable from Godau as applied by the Examiner. Further, claims 2-4 and 7-9 are dependent from one of amended independent claims 1 and 6, and due to such dependency are believed to be distinguishable over Godau as applied by the Examiner for at least the reasons described above.

Applicants therefore, respectfully request the rejection of claims 1-4 and 6-9 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) be withdrawn.

At paragraph 7 of the outstanding Office Action of March 14, 2003, the Examiner rejected claims 1-10 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Kojima et al. (JP 407262759A, Published 10/13/95). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

It is respectfully submitted that Kojima teaches a video camera that has an internal microphone and a jack for connecting an external microphone. The distinction circuit distinguishes different inserted plugs. If the inserted plug detected is a microphone plug, then the main frame is switched automatically to the external microphone. In other words, the distinction circuit can recognize different plugs inserted and make a determination as to whether or not to switch over to a different mode employing a different signal path. Thus, there is a parallel connecting configuration between the audio receiving module and both the internal microphone

and the external microphone. In contrast, amended independent claim 1 teaches a signal input and output apparatus that can be connected to several different devices at the same time. Also, these devices can have different types of connectors inserted into the jack at the same time, the connectors are connected along a single signal path thus resulting in a series configuration. These connectors are all recognized and are able to function simultaneously by the signal input and output apparatus.

For similar reasons, it is also believed that amended independent claim 6 is also distinguishable from Kojima as applied by the Examiner. Further, claims 2-5 and 7-10 are dependent from one of amended independent claims 1 and 6, and due to such dependency are believed to be distinguishable over Kojima as applied by the Examiner for at least the reasons described above.

Applicants therefore, respectfully request the rejection of claims 1-10 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) be withdrawn.

At paragraph 12 of the outstanding Office Action of March 14, 2003, the Examiner rejected claims 2, 3, 7 and 8 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Kojima et al. (JP 407262759A, Published 10/13/95) and Watanabe (JP 359094101, Published 5/30/84). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Claims 2, 3, 7 and 8 are dependent either directly or indirectly from one of amended independent claims 1 and 6, and, due to such dependency, are also believed to be distinguishable from Kojima for at least the reasons previously described. The Examiner did not rely on Watanabe to overcome the described deficiencies of Kojima. Therefore, claims 2, 3, 7 and 8 are believed to be distinguishable from the applied combination of Kojima and Watanabe.

For similar reasons, it is also believed that amended independent claim 6 is also distinguishable from Kojima and Watanabe as applied by the Examiner. Further, claims 2, 3, 7 and 8 are dependent from one of amended independent claims 1 and 6, and due to such dependency are believed to be distinguishable over Kojima and Watanabe as applied by the Examiner for at least the reasons described above.

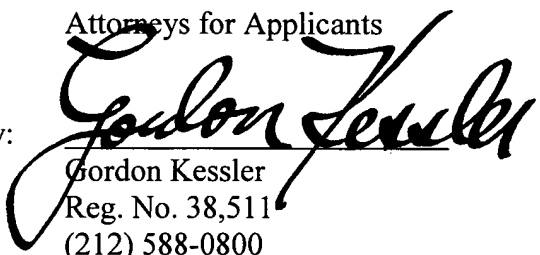
Applicants therefore, respectfully request the rejection of claims 2, 3, 7 and 8 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) be withdrawn.

It is to be appreciated that the foregoing comments concerning the disclosures in the cited prior art represent the present opinions of the applicants undersigned attorney and, in the event, that the Examiner disagrees with any such opinions, it is requested that the Examiner indicate where in the reference or references, there is the bases for a contrary view.

Please charge any fees incurred by reason of this response to Deposit Account No. 50-0320.

Respectfully submitted,
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